

Every child has two

taking

parents and needs

responsibility

emotional and financial

for your

support from both parents –

child.

*even if they were never
married or live apart.*



What if I have other questions about child support?



Your local child support office
will assist you and give you
answers to your questions.
Child support staff can also
tell you whom to call to get
answers and help on custody
and visitation issues.

How do I contact my local child support office?

The telephone number and address of your
local child support office is available by
calling (800) 846-0773. Or, you can look in
the telephone book under your county Social
Services Department.

doesn't your

Having two parents that

child

care for and support

deserve

them is what is best for

what is best

your child.

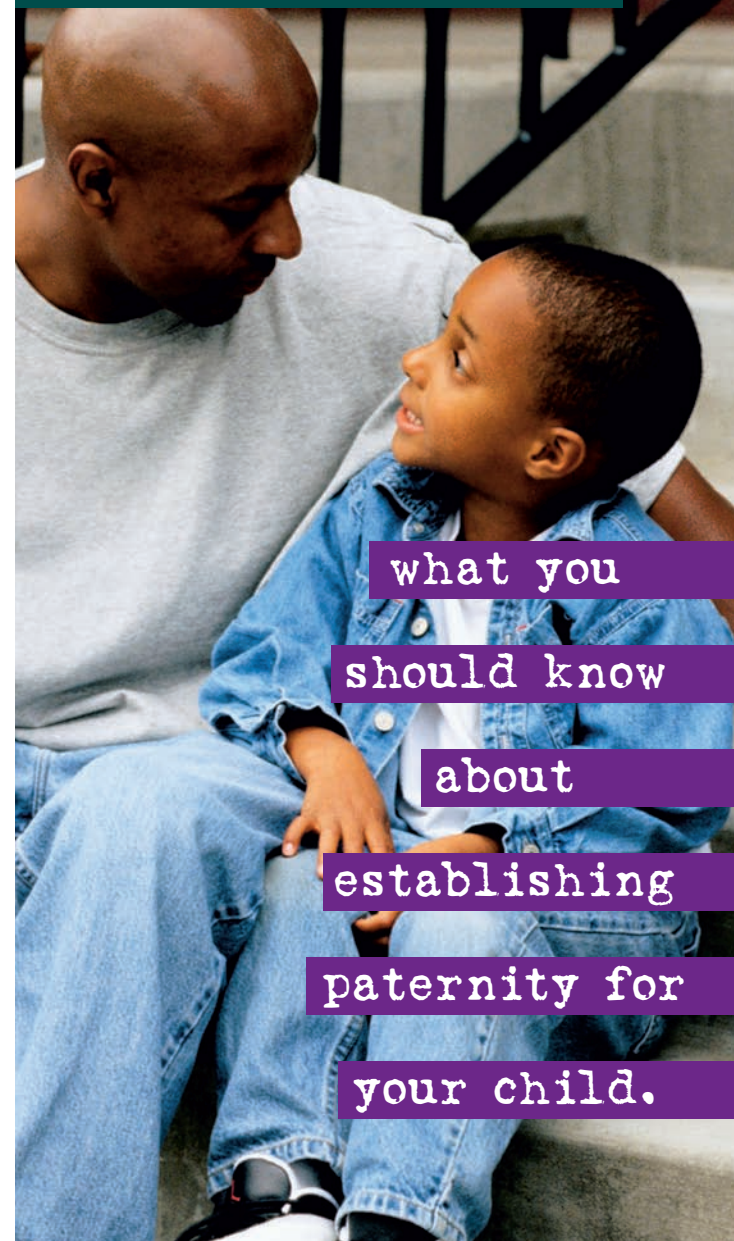
for them?



New York State
Eliot Spitzer, Governor

David A. Hansell, Commissioner
NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance
Division of Child Support Enforcement
PUB - 4719

establishing paternity



what you

should know

about

establishing

paternity for

your child.

Am I the legal father?

Every child has a biological father. However, if you were never married to the child's mother, you are not

the child's legal father. In order to become the child's legal father you must take steps to establish your paternity.

Why should I establish paternity?

Unless you establish your paternity, your child may not get the benefits that come with

having two legal parents. Benefits such as:

- Having a father's name on the birth certificate;
- Getting financial support from both parents (including social security, veterans benefits, inheritance rights, and child support); or
- Medical or life insurance from either parent.

How do I establish paternity?

There are two ways for unmarried parents to establish paternity:

- **Signing** a voluntary form called **Acknowledgment of Paternity** (available from hospitals, local district child support offices, and local birth registrars); and
- Filing a court petition to have the court determine paternity.

Now that I am the legal father, do I get custody or visitation?

Being the legal father of your child does not automatically mean that you will get custody or visitation. Custody and visitation are separate issues from child support and require separate court proceedings. Also, even if you are denied visitation, you still must continue to pay your child support!!

What if I do not pay my child support?

You are legally responsible for paying your child support. If you do not pay, the amount you owe adds up. The amount that you do not pay is called arrears, and you will be charged interest on the arrears balance. In order to collect arrears and interest, child support can:

- Garnish your wages;
- Take your state and federal income tax refund;
- Take lottery winnings;
- Seize your bank account;
- Suspend your driver's license;
- Deny your passport renewal;
- Suspend your professional and occupational license; and
- Request that you be sent to jail.



What if I am not sure I am the father?

If you are not sure that you are the father, **do not sign** a voluntary Acknowledgment of Paternity form. If this is your situation, it is best to let the court determine paternity. When this case goes to court, the court will order genetic testing to determine if you are the father of the child. This test involves the mother, child, and alleged father going to a designated site where a lab technician will rub a swab on the inside of their cheek. The lab analyzes these samples, and the genetic testing results are sent to the court. The court will look at the results of the genetic testing and determine whether you are the father of the child. Genetic testing is the most accurate way to determine if you are the father of the child.

I am the legal father of the child... now what?

Even if your child does not live with you, you will be required by law to make payments to the person caring for your child. These payments are called child support payments. New York State law requires you to pay child support until your child is 21 years old.

